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Nato Defense College, January 9, 1952

First of all let us attempt to define foreign policy. Perhaps it might be said to be the expression and representation externally of a nation's interests. Or perhaps it might be said to be the protection and advancement of the interests of one's country in relation to those of foreign nations. It need not necessarily be stated formally in documents, such as treaties, or in official pronouncements. It may indeed simply be the reflection of a mood or a sentiment indicative of a people's reaction to a theoretical situation or to a set of facts. Even in a democratic country, it may be the product of the decisions of a few political leaders. Under totalitarian rule it may be inspired solely by the conviction, will or whim of a single individual.

Its objectives are usually the preservation, extension or assertion of the policies of a whole community, of a dictator, or of a political group. Sometimes this self-interest coincides with the policy of another nation in which case one gains an ally.

To further these objectives a state may resort to aggressive warfare or, to conserve its interests, it may be forced into a defensive armed conflict. The art of diplomacy is to achieve favorable results by peaceful negotiations with other sovereign powers.

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Under the United States' Constitution, foreign policy is confided to the direction of the President who, you will recall, is also Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy.

The Constitution does not use the words Foreign Policy, but provides that the President shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of two-thirds of the Senators present, to make treaties and to appoint Ambassadors and Ministers. The President has as his senior cabinet official the Secretary of State who, under his direction, handles the external relations of the Government.

U.S. foreign policy may be said to have had its genesis soon after the outbreak of the American Revolution. The Revolution, of course, represented the decision of Colonies to break away from their mother State and to assert their independence. Naturally, an attempt to secure allies, who might for one reason or another, favor the cause of independence was uppermost in the minds of colonial statesmen. The association of France with the American pretensions had a determining influence on its outcome. France not only made large grants of money but furnished combat troops and naval forces essential to ultimate victory. In addition, a measure of assistance was accorded to the Colonies in revolt by Holland, Russia and Spain.

It may be said, therefore, that the United States owed its independence, in considerable degree, to a

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system of alliances.

These alliances were, however, of a temporary nature, and it was the strong conviction of George Washington that, separated as the new country was by an ocean barrier from Europe, it should maintain friendly terms with, but be independent of, all other nations. He said: "It is a maxim, founded on the universal experience of mankind, that no nation is to be trusted further than it is bound by its own interests and no prudent statesman or politician will venture to depart from it. "

Washington further said in his Farewell Address: "Permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others should be excluded ..... there can be no greater error than to expect and calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. "

Our second President, John Adams, narrowly averted war between the United States and France. The French, like the British, were preying upon our merchant vessels, and both countries were treating our remonstrances with the utmost contempt. Washington was appointed Lieutenant-General in command of all U.S. armed forces, the whole population was aroused, ~~and a conflict for which the~~ United States was militarily unprepared seemed inevitable.

Adams, without consulting his cabinet, assumed responsibilities ...

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responsibilities which led to a peaceful solution of these difficulties.

Jefferson, however, as Third President of the United States, received a troubled legacy. The actions of Great Britain and France, restricting the freedom of American overseas commerce, persisted. In 1807, under his pressure, an embargo was laid by Congress, prohibiting American vessels from sailing to European ports, and restricting European vessels from taking out cargoes from American ports. This measure was one of the most drastic ones ever taken in our history, and that Jefferson was able to secure the passage of an act so arbitrary and confiscatory demonstrates what a firm dominance he exercised over congressional deliberations when he wished to do so. At the same time, the Non-importation Law went into operation.

A few days before the expiration of his second term, Jefferson signed the repeal of the embargo, leaving upon his friend and successor, James Madison, the onus of evolving a new orientation of foreign policy.

Before he became President, Jefferson had served as Secretary of State under Washington. It might be noted that he performed the duties of this office with two assistants, one of them a foreign language translator. At this period he announced a doctrine of de facto recognition of other governments that is worthy of mention.

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His terms were: "We certainly cannot deny to other nations that principle whereon our government is founded, that every nation has a right to govern itself internally under what forms it pleases, transact business with other nations through whatever organ it chooses, whether that be a King, Convention, Assembly, Committee, President, or whatever it be. The only thing essential is the will of the nation".

Although Jefferson is now considered one of the greatest expansionists in American history, as a result of his purchase of the Louisiana Territory, he was a determined opponent of a standing military establishment.

During his first term as President, his original and much ridiculed design to reduce the navy to complete impotence by laying up the seven larger men-of-war in the eastern branch of the Potomac, where they would be under the immediate jurisdiction of the Navy Department, and would require but "one set of plunderers to take care of them", was followed by the suggestion, in his second annual message to Congress, that the entire navy be stored in a large drydock, to be built in Washington. Another use, however, was found for the warships. In ten years, the United States had paid to the infamous Barbary pirates almost two million dollars in tributes and ransom money. Collections were taken up in churches for the release of Americans who sweated, in chains, at the oars of the pirate galleys, or languished

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in fetid dungeons. Jefferson resolved to make an end to this disgraceful subservience. His fleets harried the Bashaw of Tripoli to such good effect that, in 1805, a peace was signed terminating the annual toll of $83.000 in money and presents which Tripoli had formerly received from the American government, although tributes continued to be paid until 1815 to other Barbary potentates.

Jefferson resolved that Napoleon's possible ambition to erect a new empire in the New World mu[illegible] be thwarted. "There is", said he, "on the globe, one single spot, the possessor of which is our natural and habitual enemy. It is New Orleans, through which the produce of three-eighths of our territory must pass to market ... France, placing herself in that door, assumes to us the attitude of defiance .... The day that France takes possession of New Orleans fixes the sentence which is to restrain her forever within her low-water mark. It seals the union of two nations who, in conjunction, can maintain exclusive possession of the ocean. From that moment we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation."

By 1812, the limitations placed upon American Commerce by British and French restrictions on free maritime circulation were such that the United States at last resorted to war against ~~Great Britain, although France had~~ been only slightly less odious in her behaviour. It is possible that ...

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that the preference given to the United Kingdom as an adversary was not uninfluenced by the hope of some American hot heads to conquer and annex Canada.

When this war ended, nothing very important had been settled by the conflict, and neither nation realized any territorial advantage under the terms of the Peace Treaty.

The attainment of independence, in 1822, by the Spanish colonies in South America brought to our attention the danger that might be presented to us if European nations should interfere with future developments in the southern hemisphere. It was this concern that, after much deliberation, was responsible for the promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine, the first significant and original step in American foreign policy, short of war.

It was to a public favorable to such expressions of policy that President Monroe's message in 1823, concerning the independence of the former Spanish colonies, was addressed. The Doctrine was, in effect, a second declaration of independence - independence of the politics of Europe. It was not the result alone of Monroe's thinking, but of that of Jefferson, John Quincy Adams and other philosophical statesmen. Notice was bluntly given to Europe that we would henceforth regard ~~"any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety"~~. ~~Moreover~~, "The American

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American continents" (and this declaration was directed at Russia, which had pretensions to our northwest coast), "by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained", were not to be considered "as subjects for colonization by any European powers". On the other hand, Monroe expressly disclaimed any intention of interfering with the then existing colonies or dependencies of any European power, and further stated that "in the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves, we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy so to do".

The enunciation of this policy, to which Great Britain had tacitly consented, put an end to the plans of the Holy Alliance. On April 17, 1824, John Quincy Adams succeeded in negotiating a convention with Russia fixing the southern limit of Russian sovereignty at 54° 40' north latitude. This treaty was a timely one, for the Russians had crossed the Bering Straits from Siberia, had extended their fur trading posts as far south as the Golden Gate, and the Czar had been pleased to designate a large part of the California coast as Russian America.

The next time the United States was engaged in hostilities, no European interests were involved. Our war with Mexico in 1848 concluded with the cession to us of the provinces of New Mexico and Upper California. The American

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Government undertook to satisfy the claims of its citizens against the Mexican Government, and also to pay Mexico the sum of fifteen million dollars.

During our Civil War, the establishment of Emperor Maximilian by Napoleon III on the throne of Mexico was an act that might have involved the United States in upholding by force of arms the Monroe Doctrine. However, our domestic preoccupations were such that no action was taken. The withdrawal of French troops, and the subsequent execution of the ill-starred Maximilian, closed this dramatic incident.

During all this period to which I have referred, and until 1898, the important thing to bear in mind is that the United States, except for the Monroe Doctrine, did not seem to find itself in need of a foreign policy in the true sense of the word, or of alliance with any European nations. The real reason for this seeming carelessness was that, without any open acknowledgment of the fact, we felt ourselves protected by the overwhelming strength in the Atlantic ocean of the British Navy. This enabled us to dispense not only with a conscious foreign policy, but with any substantial regular land forces or navy. Our people devoted themselves ~~without apprehension of external danger~~ to the development of their continent.

Our war with Spain brought, ~~in its aftermath,~~ possession of outlying territories, of which the most important was the ....

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the Philippine Islands. We did not foresee the consequences of these new accretions to the national domain. We acquired responsibilities in the Pacific, without preparing to equip ourselves to defend them if any foreign nation should conceive designs upon them.

The policy of the Open Door in China announced in 1900, has usually been hailed as a major achievement of American foreign policy. By it, we favored equal rights in China for all nations, and the maintenance of the economic and political integrity of what remained of China after various other countries had partially dismembered the Celestial Empire; but we were never ready to enforce our declarations in this regard by military intervention.

And so we drifted along to the time of the first World War, still secure, or so we assumed, because of the dominating position of the British Fleet in all oceans, and because of the balance of power on the European continent.

The story of our intervention in that War does not need retelling. The ostensible cause was the unrestricted depredations committed by Germany on the high seas. The actuality, however, was that the American people, slowly but surely, came to the realization first, that our security was threatened by the possibility of Great Britain being overwhelmed by Germany, ~~and secondly,~~ that the conquest of France might result in a permanent disequilibrium in the European power balance disastrous ~~to us.~~ Also, it should

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be observed that the sympathies of our people were ideologically, and perhaps ethnically, favorable to the Western allies.

The termination of World War I was shortly followed by a sharp diminution in the generous enthusiasm which had characterized American participation in it. Even the moral appeal of the League of Nations, as an instrument destined to guarantee a permanent peace, fell upon insensitive ears. Our people, disillusioned, weary, and confused, returned to the soft dreams of isolationism.

In spite of this great war we had not learned - what we had always neglected - to support our commitments with commensurate power, in the way of armaments, bases and frontiers, and alliances.

During the period between World War I and World War II, except for statements of principle regarding the conduct of international relations, such as the Briand-Kellogg Pact, we played only a spectator's part in the sorry events which led up to the outbreak of the last War.

The fall of France, so soon followed by the blitz of Britain, alarmed our people to a truer realization of what the struggle joined abroad indicated in terms of our own security. Citizen committees exercised pressure on the United States Government and Congress to put our military machine in readiness, and to afford assistance to Great Britain and ...

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and her Dominions, to China, and to the Governments in Exile. The inhabitants of the West Coast of the United States turned an anxious gaze toward the Orient, where Japan was asserting effectively her policy of imperialistic expansion. Beyond the frontiers of the Western Hemisphere, the whole world was in ferment or explosion.

America came of age. In March of 1941 Lend Lease legislation was enacted, over surprisingly small opposition, giving practical recognition to our instinctive feeling that our security interests were inextricably intertwined with those of the embattled members of the Atlantic Community.

United States Foreign Policy became a bipartisan affair. The attack upon Pearl Harbor by the Japanese in December 1941 resolved all remaining doubts as to whether we would send expeditionary forces overseas. The nation was united at last in its determination to bring aggression to a fearful end.

Although the sound of guns was hardly stilled before the demand for speedy demobilization of our troops became politically irresistible, I think it well to remember that the United States never ~~contemplated a withdrawal of~~ her occupying [redacted] forces from either Germany or Japan until a distant future. In both ~~countries, we continued~~ to bear the major portion of this burden.

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Meanwhile, we had warmly sponsored the United Nations Organization. The U.S. Senate ratified its charter on July 28, ...

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July 28, 1945, with only two dissenting voices. By the Act of Chapultepec and the Rio Pact we brought our Latin American neighbors into a combination for mutual defense, replacing the unilateral Declaration of the Monroe Doctrine.

Nor did we slacken in our concern over the rehabilitation of the shattered economies of our Wartime allies, or even of our enemies. Timely interim aid was furnished to France, Italy and Austria, succeeded by the more permanent provisions of the Marshall Plan. Threats against the integrity of Greece called forth a quick response, and we began to aid neutral Turkey to place herself in a better posture of defense.

These events are too recent to dwell upon at length. But I would like to observe that the most revolutionary foreign policy in American history was our advocacy of the North Atlantic Pact in 1949. By it, we abandoned for all time any conception of limiting ourselves to hemispheric defense.

We believe that the control of Europe by a single, aggressive, unfriendly power would constitute an intolerable threat to the security of the United States. An outside attack on one member of ~~this community is an attack on all~~ members (ACHESON).

A serious threat to international peace and security anywhere in the world is ~~AUTH:~~ of direct concern to this country (ACHESON).

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In lectures by others the principles and operations of ....

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of this significant organization will be elaborated upon. Suffice it to say today that within the framework of the United Nations it is the cornerstone of United States Foreign Policy, and will so remain until a time when neither y nor I will be in the land of the living.

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